

## **Section by Section Analysis of H.R. 2692, as amended by the Research Subcommittee**

*Introduced by Mr. Smith of Michigan and Ms. Johnson of Texas*

### **Section 1. Short Title.**

“United States Fire Administration Authorization Act of 2003”.

### **Section 2. United States Fire Administrator.**

Preserves the position of U.S. Fire Administrator as a Presidentially-appointed, Senate-confirmed position.

### **Section 3. National Residential Fire Sprinkler Strategy.**

Requires the Administrator to develop and implement a strategy for promoting the installation and use of residential fire sprinklers. Requires strategy to include advocacy and informational support to relevant stakeholders, with a particular focus on residences at high risk to fire hazards and occupants at high risk to fire hazards (such as senior citizens).

### **Section 4. Support for Training to Fight Maritime Fires.**

Amends the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program to allow support for training to fight maritime fires as an eligible grant activity.

### **Section 5. Firefighters Assistance Grants Program.**

Transfers responsibility for administration of the program from the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to the Administrator of the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA).

### **Section 6. Authorization of Appropriations.**

Authorizes appropriations for USFA of \$58.928, \$60.7, and \$62.52 million annually for fiscal years FY 2004 through FY 2006, respectively.

### **Section 7. Courses and Training Assistance.**

Clarifies that National Fire Academy Superintendent, in offering training courses, work to accommodate as many geographic areas and needs of firefighters as possible.

### **Section 8. New firefighting technology.**

Subsection (a) would establish a new section 8(e) of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2207). This new subsection would direct the Administrator, in consultation with the National Institute of Standards and Technology, the Inter-Agency Board for Equipment Standardization and Inter-Operability, national voluntary consensus standards development organizations, and other interested parties, to develop new, and utilize existing, measurement techniques and testing methodologies for evaluating the performance of new firefighting technology, including:

- personal protection equipment;
- devices for advance warning of extreme hazard;
- equipment for enhanced vision;
- devices to locate victims, firefighters, and other rescue personnel in above-ground and below-ground structures;
- equipment and methods to provide information for incident command, including the monitoring and reporting of individual personnel welfare;
- equipment and methods for training, especially for virtual reality training; and
- robotics and other remote-controlled devices.

The Administrator would also be required to evaluate the compatibility of new equipment and technology with existing firefighter technology, and support the development of new voluntary consensus standards through national voluntary consensus standards organizations for new firefighting technologies.

For fire departments applying for equipment under the Assistance to Firefighters grant program that does not meet applicable voluntary consensus standards, applicants must include in their applications an explanation of why the equipment will serve their needs better than equipment that does meet the standards.

Authorizes appropriations of \$2.2, \$2.25, and \$2.3 million for fiscal years 2004 through 2006 to carry out this section.

## **Sec. 9. Coordination of response to national emergency.**

Subsection (a) would create a new section 10(b) of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2209). New subsection (b) would require the Administrator, after consultation with the Director of FEMA, to provide technical assistance and training to State and local fire service officials to establish nationwide and State mutual aid systems for dealing with national emergencies. These mutual aid systems would include threat assessment and equipment deployment strategies, and include means of collecting asset and resource information to provide accurate and timely data for regional deployment. These mutual aid systems also would have to be consistent with FEMA's Federal Response Plan. The Administrator, in consultation with the Director of FEMA, would be required to develop and make available to State and local fire service officials model mutual aid plans for both intrastate and interstate assistance.

Subsection (b) would require the Administrator to report to the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the House of Representatives Committee on Science, within 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, on the need for a strategy concerning the deployment of volunteers and emergency response personnel (as defined in section 6 of the Firefighters' Safety Study Act (15 U.S.C. 2223e)), including a national credentialing system, in the event of a national emergency.

Subsection (c) would require the Director of FEMA to revise the Federal Response Plan within 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act to incorporate plans for responding to terrorist attacks, particularly in urban areas, including fire detection and suppression and related emergency services. The Director of FEMA would also be required to transmit a report to the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the House of Representatives Committee on Science on these revisions.

## **Sec. 10. Training.**

Subsection (a) would amend section 8(d)(1) of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2206(d)(1)) to authorize the Superintendent of the National Fire Academy to conduct training in the following areas:

- (i) strategies for building collapse rescue;
- (ii) the use of technology in response to fires, including terrorist incidents and other national emergencies;
- (iii) response, tactics, and strategies for dealing with terrorist- caused national catastrophes;
- (iv) use of and familiarity with FEMA's Federal Response Plan;
- (v) leadership and strategic skills, including integrated management systems operations and integrated response;
- (vi) applying new technology and developing strategies and tactics for fighting forest fires;
- (vii) integrating terrorism response agencies into the national terrorism incident response system;
- and
- (viii) response tactics and strategies for fighting fires at United States ports, including fires on the water and aboard vessels.

Subsection (b) would authorize the Superintendent of the National Fire Academy to consult with other Federal, State, and local government officials in developing curricula for classes at the Academy.

Subsection (c) would require the Administrator to coordinate the training provided under section 8(d)(1) of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2206(d)(1)) with the Attorney General, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and the heads of other Federal agencies, to ensure that such training does not duplicate existing courses available to fire service personnel and to establish a mechanism for eliminating duplicative training programs.